



## AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### MEMORANDUM

March 18, 2019

**TO:** Agricultural Advisory Committee Members (AAC)

**FROM:** Jeremy V. Criss, Director  
Office of Agriculture

**SUBJECT:** March 19, 2019 Meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee

The Agricultural Advisory Committee will meet on Tuesday **March 19, 2019 at 7:00 pm.**

**We will be meeting at the Up County Regional Services Center 12900 Middlebrook Road Germantown MD 20874 Room D on the third floor.**

The agenda is on the next page.

The draft minutes from the February 19, 2019 AAC meeting will be available prior to our meeting.

The other attachments for our meeting will be posted on the Office of Agriculture web site.

<http://montgomerycountymd.gov/AgServices/agboardscommittee.html>

I hope to see you on Tuesday.

\*Sign language interpreter services will be provided only upon request with notice as far in advance as possible but no less than 72 hours prior to the event. If you need other services or Aids to participate in this activity, please call 301-590-2810.



**Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**March 19, 2019 Agenda**

1. Call the Meeting to Order and Introductions:
2. Approval of the AAC meeting minutes from February 19, 2019.
3. The House Bill 20 and Senate Bill 344 both have passed their chambers and it looks like we will have a way of collecting portions of State Agricultural Transfer Taxes. Moving forward developers will no longer be exempt from paying the State Agricultural Transfer Tax and at they will have to pay a minimum of 35% of the State Agricultural Transfers. (First year-100% Second year-50% and Third year and beyond-35%.)
4. There are several projects in the development phase for Farm Alcohol Production Facilities in both Up and Down County areas. I am also hearing how some farmers are agreeing to contract growing of specialty crops for the owners of these facilities. The Office of Agriculture believes contract growing of specialty crops will expand moving forward representing opportunities for farmers
5. We are still waiting for the next Agritourism Study Advisory Committee-ASAC follow up meeting. Bob Cissel is meeting with the Chairman of the Planning Board on Monday and Bob has this issue on his list of questions for Casey Anderson.
6. The Sugarland Broadband Pilot construction along Partnership Road is completed and service hook ups are underway. Comcast is waiving the installation costs to the residents including the long runs up their driveways for hooking up the service. Comcast is now working to schedule construction along the Sugarland Road. We have only one remaining property owner that still needs to sign the Comcast easement. The County has applied to the USDA for grant funding to expand broadband into the Agricultural Reserve. Several Ag Reserve residents have expressed interest to assist in replicating the success of the Sugarland Pilot into other areas of the Agricultural Reserve. **There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony once the winter weather passes.** <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/cable/Sugarland/sugarland-comcast.html>
7. Bob Cissel, Director of MAP arranged for meetings with each member of the Montgomery County Council on February 6, 2019. Bob extended invitations to other agricultural groups including MCFB-Michele Cropp, MC Agricultural Center-Carl Hobbs, and the Office of Agriculture-Jeremy Criss. Council members Will Jawando, Tom Hucker and Nancy Navarro were not able to attend, and a follow up meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2019.
8. Update on the FY19 1.5% Savings Plan for the OAG totals \$14,583. The Savings Plan will delay the date of payments of matching grants the OAG will be able to provide through June 30, 2019 in addition to reducing our marketing outreach for farmers markets and the farm tour. Update on the FY20 Budget Reduction for the OAG totals \$34,000. The County Executive has accepted the OAG recommendation to reduce the Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation-MAEF and Montgomery County Public Schools-MCPS by \$34,000. This reduction will reduce the number of schools the

Mobile Science Lab-Food Fiber and you can visit each year from 27 schools down to 13 schools. The PHED Committee Work Session is May 1, 2019. The OAG has reached out to the Edward Byrd Family Foundation to see if they could backfill the reduced General Fund and restore the contract.

9. Update on the MNCPPC letters to farmers announcing a pesticide prohibition for using Glyphosate-Round Up. Jeremy met with Mike Riley and John Nissel. They explained how Council member Tom Hucker, Chair of the Transportation and Environment Committee wants to prohibit the use of Glyphosate on all properties owned by the County Parks Department. Mike and John explained what the Parks Department is doing to manage weeds without pesticides on all the athletic fields they own and operate. Mike was not aware that staff sent the December 18, 2018 letters to the tenant farmers that lease park properties. Mike said he did not want to address the park properties that are leased to farmers because there are exemptions for pesticides used for agricultural production. Jeremy suggested that moving forward, the Parks need to partner with the agricultural groups the next time they meet with Council representatives to discuss pesticide prohibitions for all park properties and Mike and John agreed with this suggestion.
10. The Maryland DNR conducted public meetings to promote their 15-year Deer Management Plan and revised Regulations. The DNR is recommending regulations that will negatively impact deer management in Montgomery County. Written comments to the MD-DNR from the County Executive, County Council and the Montgomery County Delegation were submitted by February 28, 2019.
11. On Tuesday March 12, 2019, the County Council held a continental breakfast for farmers to attend and then participate with a County Council Proclamation to celebrate National Agriculture Day. This was a well-attended event with over 30 farmers attending and several council members came to the breakfast to talk with farmers.
12. US Senator Ben Cardin is interested in conducting a round table discussion with County farmers for a date in April. Potential federal agricultural topics are H2A and H2B Seasonal workers, 2018 Federal Farm Bill-Industrial Hemp, and Federal funding for conservation assistance-Chesapeake Bay Restoration.
13. Update on the Appointments needed for the AAC. Jeremy is still working with Executive staff on the terms for the AAC members.
14. Next meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee-April 16, 2019 at the Up-County Regional Services Center-12900 Middlebrook Road Germantown, MD 20874 Room A.

### **Upcoming Meetings and Events:**

UM-Extension New and Beginning Farmer trainings-January-April 3, 2019  
Annual Montgomery Weed Control Board of Directors meeting-March 18, 2019  
Agricultural Advisory Committee-March 19, 2019 @7:00pm Up County Regional C.  
Damascus High School-FFA Education Outreach-March 25, 2019  
Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors-April 2, 2019@ 7:00pm-AHFP

Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-April 9, 2019 @ 7:00pmMontgomery Soil  
Conservation District Bd of Supervisors-April 12, 2019@ 9:00am  
Agricultural Advisory Committee-April 16, 2019 @ 7:00pm Up County Regional C.  
Planning Housing & Economic Dev. FY20 Operating Budget for OAG